

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached "Replacement Sheets" of drawings include changes to Figures 1 and 2. The attached "Replacement Sheets," which include Figures 1 and 2, replace the original sheets including Figures 1 and 2.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets

REMARKS

Claims 1, 6, 7, 10-15, and 17-20 remain pending in the application. Claims 1, 6, 10, 13, 14 and 17 have been amended. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

DRAWINGS

The drawings stand objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) for not depicting particular claimed features. The Applicants have attached revised drawings for the Examiner's approval. In the "Replacement Sheets" Figures 1 and 2 have been amended to reflect a center console as item 13 as recited in claim 1, and as recited in claim 3 (now canceled) in the application as originally filed. Regarding the objection to "between vehicle seats" in claim 17 and its omission from the drawings, "between vehicle seats" has been deleted from claim 17. The drawings are now believed to be in compliance with 37 CFR 1.83(a).

SPECIFICATION

The specification stands objected to for certain informalities. The Applicants have amended the specification according to the Examiner's suggestions. Specifically, the Abstract has been revised and is now believed to concisely set forth and summarize the structure of the claimed elements. Additionally, part of paragraph [0022] has been deleted. Reconsideration and withdrawal of these objections is respectfully requested.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

Claims 1, 6, 7, 10-15, and 17-20 stand objected to because of informalities. All of such informalities mentioned by the Examiner have been corrected.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1, 6, and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In response to the rejection, “in an appropriate position” has been deleted from claim 1.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 6, 10-15, and 17-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by GB 2 208 542. This rejection is respectfully traversed, although claims have been amended.

Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended and now recites in part, “a bellows duct portion located at a boundary between a seat portion and a back-support portion of said front seat to permit said back-support portion to fold forward” and a “...top blow-out port provided ~~in an appropriate position~~ at a top back surface of said front seat ...” Support for such amendments can be found at least at paragraph [0021] and Figures 1 and 2. The Applicants contend that GB 2 208 542 does not disclose “a bellows duct ...” to permit said back-support portion to fold forward.” GB 2 208 542 does not clearly disclose such a bellows duct.

Additionally, the applicants contend that GB 2 208 542 does not disclose a blow-out port ... at a top back surface of said front seat...” GB 2 208 542 specifically discloses at page 2, line 14, “An object of the present invention is to provide a means for directing heater air more positively to the feet of a rear seat passenger.” Additionally, GB 2 208 542 at other locations discusses discharging air toward the feet of passengers. The Applicants now believe claim 1 to be in condition for allowance.

Claim 6

Claim 1 has been amended and now recites in part, “a rigid, smooth leading duct member provided in [[a]] said back-support portion of said front seat, having two ends, wherein one of said two ends is connected to said flexible duct member, and another one of said two ends is connected to said top blow-out port, ...” An advantage of such a structure is that a rigid, smooth leading duct member greatly reduces friction losses of the airflow within the duct. This maintains as much of the flow velocity of air at the top blow-out port as much as possible. Such rigid, smooth ducting also permits a smaller blower motor to move the same amount of air as a larger blower coupled with non-rigid, non-smooth ducts. Furthermore, the Applicants contend that GB 2 208 542 does not disclose such a structure. As stated above, GB 2 208 542 specifically discloses at page 2, line 14, “An object of the present invention is to provide a means for directing heater air more positively to the feet of a rear seat passenger.” GB 2 208 542 continues to stress heat directed to the feet of rear passengers without regard to directing air from a top portion of a seat, as in Applicant’s claimed invention. The Applicants now believe claim 6 to be in condition for allowance.

Claim 10

Claim 10 has been amended to recite in part “a rigid, smooth seat back support duct within a seat back support portion, said rigid, smooth seat back support duct having a first end as a top blow-out port in a top portion of said seat back support portion and a second end as a bellows duct portion ...”

The Applicants contend that GB 2 208 542 does not disclose Applicants' claimed structure. An advantage of Applicants' claimed invention is air-conditioned air is discharged at a top portion of the seat with minimal duct friction losses due to a rigid, smooth duct. Another advantage is the addition of a bellows duct portion at the second end to permit folding of the seat back. Such a combination of structures is not disclosed by GB 2 208 542. Such rigid, smooth ducting also permits a smaller blower motor to move the same volume of air as a larger blower with non-rigid, non-smooth ducts.

Claims 11-15

Claims 11-15 are believed to be in condition for allowance because they ultimately depend from claim 10, now believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claim 17

Claim 17 now recites, in part “a non-bellows seat back support duct within said seat back support portion, said non-bellows seat back support duct fluidly connecting with said ~~u-shaped~~ U-shaped duct;

a blow-out port at an end of said seat back support duct, said blow-out port located at an *upper surface of said seat back support portion..*” (italic emphasis added).

The Applicants contend that GB 2 208 542 does not disclose Applicants' claimed structure. An advantage of Applicants' claimed structure is air-conditioned air is discharged at an upper surface of the seat with minimal duct friction losses due to a "non-bellows" duct. Such non-bellows ducting also permits a smaller blower motor to move the same volume of air as a larger blower using long lengths of bellows ducts.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 7 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over GB 2 208 542 (previously made of record via IDS). This rejection is respectfully traversed. Because claim 1 has been amended, claim 7 is believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claim 7

Because claim 1 has been amended and is believed to be in condition for allowance, and claim 7 depends from claim 1, claim 7 is also believed to be in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner

believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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